Benefits of Gender Balance in corporate decision-making

KEN FORUM 2012
Feedback from Thematic Table E
Do Women have to become Men?

The need to think/act like men in order to be accepted, listened to, be credible as a leader.

• Being strong and hard, sacrificing family-life, ...
• Is it necessary to change to a male attitude?
  – See the criteria for appointing a successor to the CEO
• Impact of New Generations & Technology
  – The importance of Participative Leadership
  – minimizing the “Anywhere, Anytime” roadblock
• The Importance of what mothers learn their children
  – what they learn their boys and what they teach their girls
  – reproduction of stereotypes plus the cultural reinforcement
  – Do women accept these or not?
    • If not, different consequences depending on the region
Cultural Impact

- Perception Management: “Women as Victims” OR “Men as Actors”
- Traditions are maintained by the education given by the mothers
  - Open-mindedness of men is higher amongst those who had stronger mothers
- Change Factor: Impact of the change in Buying Power of Women
  - Gradually empowering women: from customer to leader
- Lack of Supportive systems & “Bad conscience”:
  - Danger: failing social systems for ageing parents can lead to more family-care
  - Regionally it still is a Choice between marriage & career
  - More support from employers:
    - more flexibility = more productivity + better talent attraction/retention
  - Child Custody changes in the US to Men shows the Impact of responsibility
Recognition of Female Leadership Qualities is needed

• The Negative Impact of Alfa-Females on younger women
  • Quote from Madelin Albright: “There is a special place in hell for women who do not support other women”

• Less Ego, longer term thinking, more consensus building, more compromise, ...
  • The qualities for Future Leaders?
  • Lead to better quality management decisions
Integrity & Ethics

• Corporate behavior should not succumb to jungle rules

• Acting ethically & morally correct is not against business logic & productivity:
  – Acknowledgement of the claim that women are more honest and have more ethical alignment between thoughts & actual behavior
  – Changing external factor:
    • The Importance of Ethics for Generation Y & Z
    • Need for Ethical alignment between messages and leadership behavior
Quota : Yes or No ?

• CONSENSUS : It is not the only solution !
  – cfr Norwegian experience & Swedish success

• PRO :
  – Seen slow progress prognosis : Positive & Speedy effect from Quotum by Law
  – Pragmatical logic : The final result is what counts
  – Alternative 1 : Pro, but for a certain time delay, to speed up the change vs the
demographical evolution (= Temporary Catalyst)
  – Alternative 2 : Companies implement their own Quota, with minimal
governmental supervision

• CONTRA :
  – Impossible to implement for creative roles, very hard for Industrial/Technology
Sectors : therefore it is also a problem of education & profession attractiveness
  – Being chosen on the basis of competencies and skills, requires change of the
system (Remark ! Is that possible without changing the leadership ?)